



**MERSHON CENTER**  
for  
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

*International Interdisciplinary Scholarly*

[Home](#) [About Us](#) [Areas of Expertise](#) [News](#) [Events](#) [Grants](#) [People](#) [Publications](#) [Contact Us](#)

[home](#) > [expertise](#) > [graduate student research](#) > mark rice

[Faculty Spotlight](#)

[Use of Force and  
Diplomacy](#)

[Ideas, Identities  
and Decisional  
Processes that  
Affect Security](#)

[Institutions that  
Manage Violent  
Conflict](#)

[Graduate Student  
Research](#)

## The Alliance City: NATO and Berlin, 1958-63

Principal Investigators: Mark Rice

It was a "free city." An island of freedom in a sea of oppression. A symbol of the Cold War and its contrasts.

It was also the thorn in the side of the Western alliance; what Nikita Khrushchev called "the testicles" the Soviets could squeeze "to make NATO scream."

And perhaps most important, it was the likeliest place where a war between the Soviet Union and the United States would start, and the likeliest place where that war would go nuclear. It was Berlin.

Mark Rice is investigating the Berlin Crisis and the diplomatic and strategic effects that NATO had on Western policy from 1958 to 1963. He hopes to show that NATO was not only a useful forum for the Western allies to develop a unified strategy toward the Soviet threat, but also that NATO had its own interests and goals and played a significant part in the formulation of that unified approach.

Mershon funds allowed Rice to travel to Brussels, home of the NATO Archives. Records there are crucial to show that NATO had its own agency and perspective on the Berlin Crisis.

Rice will use the documents to obtain a picture of what officials in NATO's headquarters were thinking, relative not only to the situation in Berlin, but also to policy coming out of Washington, London, Paris, Bonn, and elsewhere.

Rice also spent time at the British National Archives in London. He focused on high-level government documents detailing the official response to the Berlin Crisis, as well as the relationship between Berlin and NATO.

Records from the Foreign Office detailed diplomatic



Mark Rice

Department of History  
The Ohio State University

conversation between British officials and their counterparts in allied states, while records in the Ministry of Defense gave insight into military planning for a possible war beginning in Berlin.

Rice notes that the Mershon grant enabled him to "collected more material than I originally expected, and from a wider range of sources than I had hoped to be able to look at in just four weeks."

© 2006-08 Mershon Center for International Security Studies  
1501 Neil Ave.  
Columbus, OH 43201  
Phone: 614.292.1681  
Fax: 614.292.2407  
Email: [mershoncenter@osu.edu](mailto:mershoncenter@osu.edu)